

would be lost, or of acquiring the dexterity or wisdom, etc., of the dead. Enemies are eaten to win their strength, dexterity, etc. Only a bit is eaten. There are no great feasts. The fat and soft parts are eaten because they are the residence of the soul. In eating enemies there appears to be ritual significance.¹ It may be the ritual purpose to get rid of the soul of the slain man for fear that it might seek revenge for his death.

342. Some inhabitants of West Australia explained cannibalism (they ate every tenth child born) as "necessary to keep the tribe from increasing beyond the carrying capacity of the territory."² Infanticide is a part of population policy. Cannibalism may be added to it either for food supply or goblinism. When children were sacrificed in Mexico their hearts were cooked and eaten, for sorcery.³

343. Judicial cannibalism. Another use of cannibalism in the in-group is to annihilate one who has broken an important taboo. The notion is frequently met with, amongst nature peoples, that a ghost can be got rid of by utterly annihilating the corpse, e.g. by fire. Judicial cannibalism destroys it, and the members of the group by this act participate in a ritual, or sacramental ceremony, by which a criminal is completely annihilated. Perhaps there may also be the idea of collective responsibility for his annihilation. To take the life of a tribe comrade was for a long time an act which needed high motive and authority and required expiation. The ritual of execution was like the ritual of sacrifice. In the Hebrew law some culprits were to be stoned by the whole congregation. Every one must take a share in the great act. The blood guilt, if there was any, must be incurred by all.* Primitive taboos are put on acts which offend the ghosts and may, therefore, bring woe on the whole group. Any one who breaks a taboo commits a sin and a crime, and excites the wrath of the superior powers. Therefore he draws on himself the fear

and horror of his comrades. They must extrude
him by banish-
ment or death. They want to dissociate
themselves from him.
They sacrifice him to the powers which he has
offended. When
his comrades eat his corpse they perform a duty.
They annihi-
late him and his soul completely.

1

Smyth, *Victoria*, I, 245.

2

Whitmarsh, *The World's Rough Hand*, 178.

» *Glodus*, LXXXVI, 112.

⁴ W. R. Smith, *Religion of the Semites*, 284.